

Fear of the unknown

Fear of the unknown is something we deal with on a day to day basis. It is part of our nature and it's essentially a protection mechanism that keeps us safe when there is a perceived potential of danger.

When we look at adventure sports in particular, that fear SHOULD be there as you can get seriously hurt practicing some of the more daring activities out there. Your fear comes from you being aware of that fact. So it's a healthy thing, it shows that you aren't stupid! And that is only a good thing to a point. Once you understand that you might get hurt and once you have a healthy respect for what you are doing, continuing to be afraid will only end up holding you back. This is when the fear of the unknown can turn unhealthy.



One of the first and main things to do when approaching an adventure sport is to take your time. A lot of people tend to push themselves too hard as if they are supposed to turn from zero to hero in record time! If you just bought that skateboard or snowboard or mountain bike, don't try to jump off ramps or do halfpipes or go freestyle biking the next day - it's just not going to be a good idea. The way our minds work, you SHOULD be scared to do all that stuff at this stage because you are not ready! Take your time, learn at your own pace. Being relaxed with your muscles loose as opposed to tense will help your movement and your control immensely. So relax and breathe, one step at a time.

A lot of athletes and extreme sports stars know that falling a few times is the best thing for you. It ends up building your confidence because you get to experience what falling feels like. This helps minimise the fear as you already know what you can expect in the event that you fail a move. Every time you fail you get a little better. Your muscles start to 'remember' what NOT to do.

Now, a key ingredient and a very logical one and one that a lot of adventure sports enthusiasts out there don't want to hear is...PRACTICE. Practice is the one thing that will dissipate fear and your control and confidence grow. Remember muscle memory? This is what it's all about, developing specific reflexes and moves that will activate quicker and make you safer.

Scared of doing something? Then follow tips, read about it and practice it a lot. Eventually, you'll be absolutely fine.

As is the case with anything you want to achieve your true potential in, you will need to commit to your chosen sport. In adventure sports you cannot do things by halves. This is another crucial factor in keeping you safe and dealing with your fear. You need to commit to it.

If you don't commit to learning tricks and performing them you actually have a higher chance of hurting yourself. If you only jump/ride/dive in half way, then you have already decided to fail. Remember practicing and failing so that you know what failing feels like. When you feel you know and you want to go anyway, just give it your all and believe that you can do it.

A great help here is Visualisation and seeing yourself complete a move/trick in your mind will help you achieve it when the time comes. Practice one skill at a time and focus all your mental imagery on completing it. From the very start to the very end and don't forget to feel what it will feel like to master it. The elation, the feel good sensations and the confidence will begin to re-wire your thinking into new actions and reactions. Let that confidence flow through you as any fear subsides.

A fear of the unknown cannot exist when you have seen yourself achieve what you are afraid of. It's one of the laws of nature, everything gives rise to its own kind. Think you can and you will. Think yourself confident and you will be confident.



Also remember to give yourself praise every time you improve, don't wait until your fear has been completely overcome! Celebrate each milestone, each small goal you have set for yourself and accomplished. When you see how good it feels to gain an edge on your fear, you'll be ready to face the next step head-on!

Remember our minds are designed to protect us from any potential hurt or harm, physically or emotionally, it does this automatically at the unconscious level. When you accept fear is a natural signal, you can assess it and move through it.

[To master your mind in sport... we will let you in on a 'Secret'.](#)



MAKE THE FIRST STEP

About Stuart | Australia's #1 for Sport Hypnosis

“You are what you choose to believe you can be”

- Professional Clinical Hypnotherapist
- Australia's No. 1 for Sports Hypnotherapy
- Published author of 'The Dear Diary Process' book
- Creator of the 'Meta 4 Kids' program
- Co-creator of the FitMind program
- Presenter and speaker

As a professionally trained hypnotherapist, I specialise in elite athletes and sporting teams. Incredibly the same way athletes work allows me to integrate my abilities and awesome processes into business performance, working with people to maximise performance and attitude.

My sporting clients include Olympians, National, Commonwealth and 25 World Champions and... add to this a collection of professional golfers, footballers from every code, surfers, netballers and motorsport drivers and teams.

Within the walls of my professional offices in Brisbane, Australia many lives have been transformed forever by releasing their potential. Once we remove blockages, doubts, fears, beliefs and old habits that are restricting them, life becomes awesome.



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